

For Immediate Release

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April 12, 2011

201-222-2828

*Washington, D.C.*-- Today, on National Equal Pay Day, Congressman Sires became an original cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, introduced by Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), which would close the wage gap between men and women. National Equal Pay Day symbolizes the day when the average American woman's earnings matches the average American man's earnings for the previous year.

"Although nearly half of the workforce is comprised of women, workplace inequity still continues, and New Jersey women only earn 76.5 cents to every dollar earned by a man," said Congressman Sires. "The wage disparity is even greater for minority women and whatever the disparity, these gaps are fundamentally unfair."

The Paycheck Fairness Act would amend the Equal Pay Act to make employers who violate sex discrimination prohibitions liable in a civil action suit. This legislation would require the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to train employees and affected individuals on wage discrimination. Additionally, the Secretary of Labor would make grants to eligible entities for negotiation skills training for girls and women. Congressman Sires was an original co-sponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act during the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, which passed the House of Representatives, but stalled in the Senate.

"Two thirds of women are the sole income earner or co-earner in their family, and pay inequity negatively affects families and communities," said Sires. "It is long overdue that women be paid equally as men, when they perform in the same job. I urge my colleagues in Congress to pass this legislation as we did last year, so that it can become law."

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